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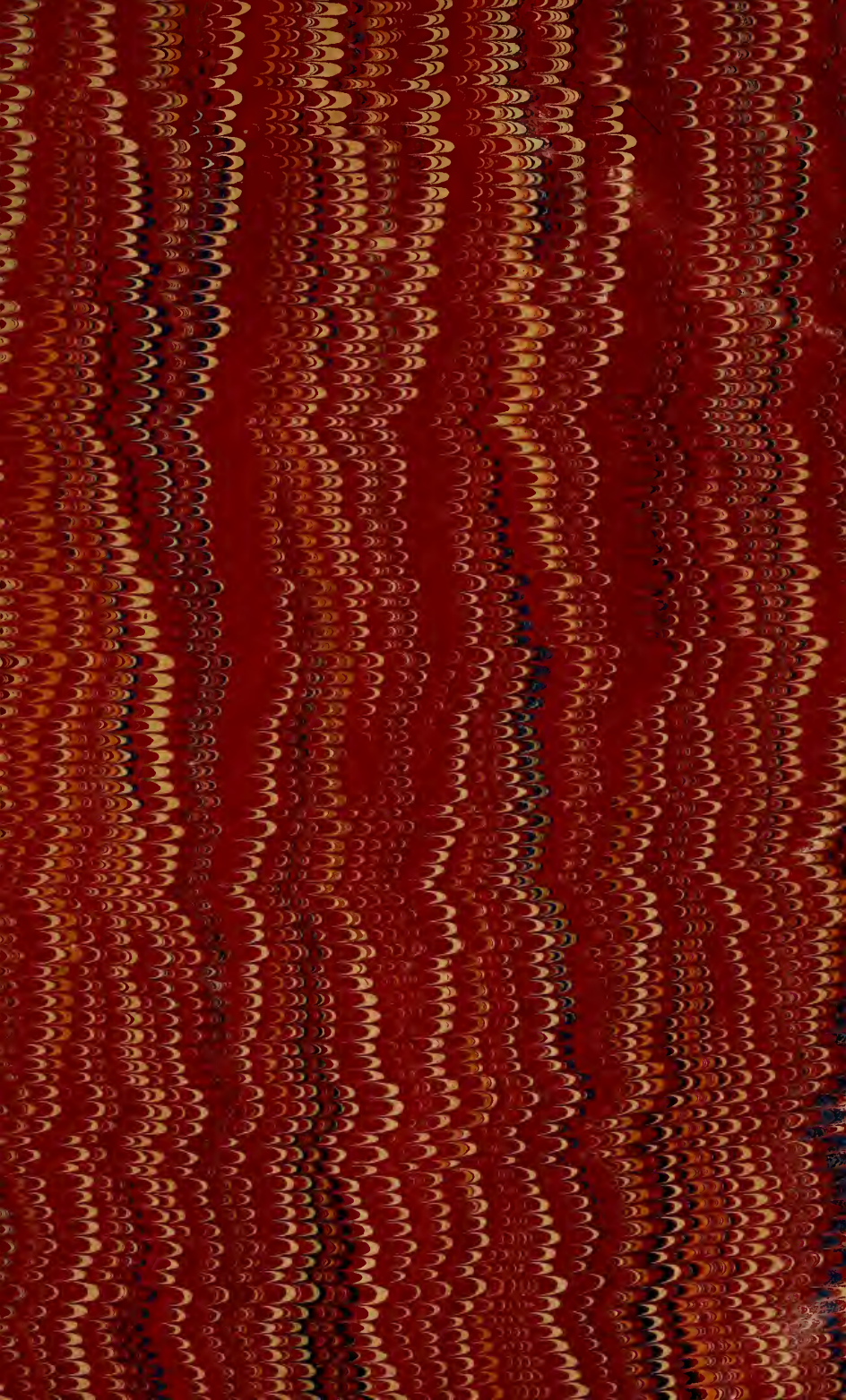

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Versified Chronology

—OF THE—

SOVEREIGNS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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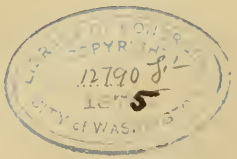

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James M. Coombs,
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The Royal Coat of Arms of Great Britain.

The first and fourth quarters, GULES (in red), have three lions PASSANT GARDANT (walking, looking full-faced), in PALE (one above the other); the second quarter containing the arms of Scotland has, OR (yellow), a lion RAMPANT (erect, standing on one of his hind legs), within a DOUBLE TRESSURE, FLORY, COUNTERFLORY (double trellis with flowers opposite to each other), GULES (red); the third quarter has AZURE (in blue), an Irish harp, OR (yellow) stringed, ARGENT (white); all within the garter, the chief ensign of that most noble Order. Upon the garter is inscribed the motto of that Order—"Honi soit qui mal y pense:" Evil to him who evil thinks—while above it is a rich mantle of cloth, DOUBLE ERMINED (a white field dotted with black spots), adorned with an imperial crown, surmounted with a lion PASSANT GARDANT (walking, looking full-faced). For supporters, the whole has on the right side a lion RAMPANT GARDANT (erect, standing on one of his hind legs, looking full-faced), OR (in yellow), crowned: on the left side a unicorn, ARGENT (white), CRINED (bearded) and UNGULED (hoofed); OR (yellow), GORGED (encircled) with a collar of CROSSES PATTEE (crosses that are small in the middle and widen at the ends), and FLEUR-DE-LIS (lilies), and a chain thereto affixed, passing between his forelegs, and reflexed over his back, OR (yellow); both the lion and unicorn standing on a compartment from whence issue royal badges of her Majesty's chief dominions—a Red Rose for England, a Thistle for Scotland, and a Shamrock for Ireland—and on the compartment an escroll with this motto, "Dieu et mon Droit" (God and my Right)—words first used by Richard I., on gaining a great victory over the French.

By omitting the parenthetical expressions the above may be read in heraldic language only, or, by omitting the heraldic technicalities it may be read in common English.

Under James I., 1623, the Arms of Scotland were impaled in the first quarter and the Harp of Erin incorporated in the third quarter; the Arms of France already occupying the second quarter. In 1801 the Arms of France being entirely removed, the Arms of Scotland were changed to the second quarter. The same year the Arms of Hanover were taken from the fourth quarter and less prominently emblazoned by impaling them on the centre of the shield and the Arms of England duplicated in their place. On the accession of Queen Victoria the Arms of Hanover were removed entirely, leaving the Arms of Great Britain and Ireland as represented in the engraving. The term Great Britain includes only England, Scotland and Wales; hence the designation Great Britain and Ireland as including the entire Kingdom apart from its colonies, which latter it has been suggested ought to be in some way designated in the fourth quarter instead of the duplicated English.

The Harp has been the national symbol of Ireland from time immemorial. But the Harp of Tara owned by Brian Boroihme, Monarch of Ireland from A. D. 1001 to 1014, and still preserved in the Museum of Dublin University, has been immortalized by the beautiful melody of Thomas Moore, the celebrated Irish poet. See description in Mooney's History of Ireland.

THE BRITONS.

A brave and warlike race the Britons were,
Men bold and hardy; women chaste and fair;
All stained, uncloth'd, unarmed from head to heel,
Fought Cæsar, with his army clad in steel.

ANGLO-SAXON KINGS.

Egbert the Great, the first sole Monarch of England began to reign in the year 827

Ethelwolf began to reign,			*838*	*Edmund I, the Pious, began to reign*			*941*
Ethelbald,	"	"	*857*	*Eldred,*	"	"	*948*
Ethelbert,	"	"	*860*	*Edwy,*	"	"	*955*
Ethelred I.,	"	"	*866*	*Edgar, the Peaceable,*	"	"	*959*
Alfred the Great,	"		*872*	*Edward, the Martyr,*	"	"	*975*
Edward the Elder,	"		*900*	*Ethelred II.,*	"	"	*978*
Athelstan,	"		*925*	*Edmund II., Ironsides,*	"	"	*1016*

FOUR DANISH KINGS.

Sweyn,	*1016*	*Harold I, Harefoot,*	*1036*
Canute the Great,	*1017*	*Canute II, or Hardicanute.*	*1039*

SAXON LINE RESTORED.

Edward the Confessor,	*1041*	*Harold II,*	*1066*

NORMAN LINE.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Reigned from 1066 to 1087.

William, a spurious branch of Rollo's race,
From Norman's Duke to England's King we trace.
He conquered Saxon Harold, seized the throne;
Was brave, yet proud, and partial to his own.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

Reigned from 1087 to 1100.

William the Second won but little fame;
He built the Hall which Westminster we name;
Was valiant, rash, intemperate, and vain,
And was by Tyrrell in New Forest slain.

HENRY I., BEAUCLERC.

Reigned from 1100 to 1135.

Learned and polite, the Conqueror's youngest son,
By wisdom kept the crown his wiles had won;
Brave, handsome, sober, to his subjects kind,
Yet to base passions virtue oft resigned.

STEPHEN.

Reigned from 1135 to 1154.

Valiant and prudent, but of dubious right,
Which oft with various chance was tried in fight:
At length, his own son dead, this prince agreed
That Henry, son of Maud, should him succeed.

PLANTAGENETS.

HENRY II.

Reigned from 1154 to 1189.

First of Plantagenets now Henry reigns,
Famed for his power and his large domains;
A priest imperious vexed him all his life,
His sons proved rebels, and a shrew his wife.

RICHARD I., CŒUR de LION.

Reigned from 1189 to 1199.

Richard, for boist'rous courage chiefly known,
Wasted his years in countries not his own;
A pris'ner long, at length untimely slain;
England had small advantage from his reign.

JOHN, LACKLAND.

Reigned from 1199 to 1216.

John's reign was full of trouble and turmoils,
From his bad conduct and from priestly wiles;
England's great Charter by the Barons won
He gave, but to the Pope resigned his crown.

HENRY III.

Reigned from 1216 to 1272.

This King chief note in history doth gain,
From civil discord and protracted reign;
Fickle and weak, he saw his crown just gone;
Yet dying left it to his warlike son.

EDWARD I., LONGSHANKS.

Reigned from 1272 to 1307.

Far distant, when acknowledged, Edward came,
Assumed the crown, and ruled with matchless fame ;
Welsh, Scots, he conquered, made and unmade kings,
Reformed the laws and clipt the clergy's wings.

Under the reign of Edward I. Wales was finally subdued and the King's eldest son styled Prince of Wales.

EDWARD II, OF CAERNAVON.

Reigned from 1307 to 1327.

Poor Edward's morn the brightest prospect hails,
The Welsh proclaimed him (he was born in Wales),
But by his queen and Mortimer dethroned,
Oppressed by murd'rers poor Caernavon groaned.

EDWARD III.

Reigned from 1327 to 1377.

Triumphant Edward, the Black Prince's sire,
In peace and war, we honor and admire ;
France conquered, Scots subdued preserved his name,
But his last days eclips'd his former fame.

RICHARD II.

Reigned from 1377 to 1399.

Richard from valiant sire and grandsire sprung,
Proved weak, perverse and rash for he was young;
Yet brave, from rebels did defend his throne,
And when deposed lost not his life alone.

HOUSE OF LANCASTER OR RED ROSE.

HENRY IV., BOLINGBROKE.

Reigned from 1399 to 1413.

Lancastrian Henry now the throne possessed,
A prince of no mean politics confessed;
A crown usurped, or else but bravely won,
He left regretful to his warlike son.

HENRY V.

Reigned from 1413 to 1422.

All conquering Henry's parts and prowess rare,
The glorious fields of Agincourt declare;
The vicious Prince a virtuous King became;
But priests indulg'd kept England in a flame.

HENRY VI.

Reigned from 1422 to 1461.

Meek, mild and merciful, but weak his sway;
A king of France, the French would not obey;
Tho' brave his queen the Yorkists seized his throne,
And his son's murder ushered in his own.

HOUSE OF YORK OR WHITE ROSE.

EDWARD IV.

Reigned from 1461 to 1483.

Edward of York not unmolested reigned,
Yet, when victorious, he the throne maintained;
Revengeful, jealous, politic and shrewd,
His virtues were but luxury subdued.

EDWARD V.

Reigned Two Months, Twelve Days, 1483.

Poor child, how short his reign! domestic strife
Untimely closed his own and brother's life;
He saw each faithful friend by friend expire
By Richard's fraud, who did to rule aspire.

RICHARD III., HUNCH-BACK.

Reigned from 1483 to 1485.

Richard with deep hypocrisy endued,
Ambitious, cruel, destitute of good,
Did public praise obtain by wholesome laws,
And bravely fell, had virtue been the cause.

HOUSE OF TUDOR.

HENRY VII.

Reigned from 1485 to 1509.

The first of Tudor's race, of high renown,
'Spite of pretenders, held the English crown;
Subtle, profound, his projects tended still,
To fix his empire, and his coffers fill.

HENRY VIII.

Reigned from 1509 to 1547.

Henry, of haughty mind and sturdy mien,
With fury reign'd and often changed his Queen;
Disowned the Pope, yet kept us Papists still,
And burnt both sides that dared dispute his will.

WIVES OF HENRY VIII.

1. Catharine of Aragon, mother of Bloody Mary. She was cruelly divorced by her fickle husband.

2. Anne Boleyn, mother of the famous Queen Elizabeth. She was beheaded.

3. Jane Seymour, mother of Edward VI. She died soon after the birth of her child.

4. Anne of Cleves, who was divorced very soon after marriage.

5. Catharine Howard, who was soon beheaded on the charge of a former dissolute life.

6. Catharine Parr, who survived her husband.

EDWARD VI.

REIGNED FROM 1547 TO 1553.

Edward was learned, meek, pious, just and sage:
A man in council tho' a child in age:
He laid the basis of the church we boast,
But by his uncles' quarrels oft was crossed.

MARY I.

REIGNED FROM 1553 TO 1558.

When bloody Mary filled the English throne,
The good her brother did was soon undone;
Thro' her short reign (tho' much too long) was seen,
The wretched bigot and the cruel Queen.

ELIZABETH.

REIGNED FROM 1558 TO 1603.

The fam'd Eliza's long and prosperous reign
Quelled Romish superstition, humbled Spain.
Invasions, plots, her genius soared above,
Blest with her servants' and her subjects' love.

GREAT BRITAIN.

HOUSE OF STUART.

JAMES I.

REIGNED FROM 1603 TO 1625.

England's first Stuart from the Scotian clime:
Learned, but pedantic; peaceful to a crime;
His weak, but arbitrary acts prepare
A scene of ills for his succeeding heir.

Margaret, sister of Henry VIII., was mother of James V., who was father of Mary, Queen of Scots, who was mother of James I., of England, the same as James VI., of Scotland; thus uniting the two crowns of Scotland and England, although their Parliaments remained distinct for a century longer.

CHARLES I.

REIGNED FROM 1625 TO 1649.

Unhappy prince! his fate atones his fault,
Not weak, but obstinate, and badly taught;
The Constitution hurt by lawless deeds,
Is quite suspended when the monarch bleeds.

THE COMMONWEALTH.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

LORD PROTECTOR FROM 1649 TO 1660.

Cromwell, Protector made when King Charles died;
He spread the fame of England far and wide;
Bold and intrepid, politic, profound,
In war and peace alike he was renowned.

HOUSE OF STUART.

CHARLES II.

REIGNED FROM 1660 TO 1685.

Heedless and dissipated, courteous, gay,
In Charles's court few cares did find their way,
But Popish influence stained his latter day
With plots and fines and arbitrary sway.

JAMES II.

REIGNED FROM 1685 TO 1689.

Blinded with zeal this furious Popish king,
Rome's yoke on England sought again to bring.
He (while he reigned) usurped a lawless sway,
Till William came, and opened freedom's day.

WILLIAM III. AND MARY II.

Reigned from 1689 to 1702.

William the hero, and Maria mild,
He James's nephew, she his eldest child,
Fixed freedom to the church, reformed the coin,
Opposed the French and settled Brunswick's line.

ANNE.

Reigned from 1702 to 1714.

Ten years of glory brightened Anne's reign,
While Marlborough's arms did victory maintain.
Nor should hard censure shade her closing scene;
For tho' misled well-minded was the Queen.

During the reign of Queen Anne, Scotland was united to England and its Parliament extinguished, but the crown-jewels of Scotland are still carefully preserved in the castle at Edinburgh.

HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK, Hanover or Guelph.

GEORGE I.

Reigned from 1714 to 1727.

Inured alike to council and the field,
Before his sway saw opposition yield.
In wisdom and the laws, he put his trust;
Was prudent, cautious, fortunate and just.

GEORGE II.

Reigned from 1727 to 1760.

In issue happiest of the kingly strain;
Triumphant o'er rebellion and its train,
He silenced faction, humbled France's pride,
He lived beloved, and crowned with glory died.

GEORGE III.

Reigned from 1760 to 1820.

Great George's acts, in arts and commerce shine;
Long may the crown be worn by Brunswick's line,:
Long did he live, blest with his people's love,
And late he changed his crown for one above.

GEORGE IV.

Reigned from January 29, 1820 to June 26, 1830.

Proud, inconsid'rate, lavish, sensual, vain,
Britain had little glory from his reign;
But the great arts of industry and peace
Flourished, and progress bade oppression cease.

WILLIAM IV.

Reigned from 1830 to June 20, 1837.

The sailor-king, by England well beloved,
A monarch of inferior mind he proved;
Yet grand reforms progressed throughout the land,
Which he could not approve nor understand.

VICTORIA.

BEGAN TO REIGN JUNE 20, 1837.

Victoria, last and happiest of the line,
Long will her name in proudest lustre shine;
Domestic virtue, public honor crown
Her fame, with veneration and renown.

She is the only daughter of Edward, Duke of Kent, 4th son of George III. She was married February 10th, 1840, to Prince Albert, 2d son of Ernest, Duke of Saxe Coburg Gotha, who was brother of the Duchess of Kent mother of the Queen.

CHILDREN OF VICTORIA.

Victoria Adelaide Marie Louisa. Born Nov. 21, 1840. Married Jan. 25, 1858, to Prince Frederick William of Prussia.

Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. Born Nov. 9, 1841. Married March 10, 1863, to Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

Alice Maud Mary. Born April 25, 1843. Married June 18, 1862, to Prince Louis of Hesse.

Alfred Ernest Albert, Duke of Edinburgh. Born Aug. 6, 1844. Married Jan. 23, 1874, to Grand Duchess Maria, only daughter of Czar Alexander of Russia.

Helena Augusta Victoria. Born May 25, 1846. Married July 5, 1866, to Prince Christian of Augustenberg.

Louisa Caroline Alberta. Born March 18, 1848. Married March 31, 1871, to the Marquis of Lorne, son of the Duke of Argyle.

UNMARRIED.

Arthur William Patrick Albert. Born May 1, 1850.

Leopold George Duncan Albert. Born April 7, 1853.

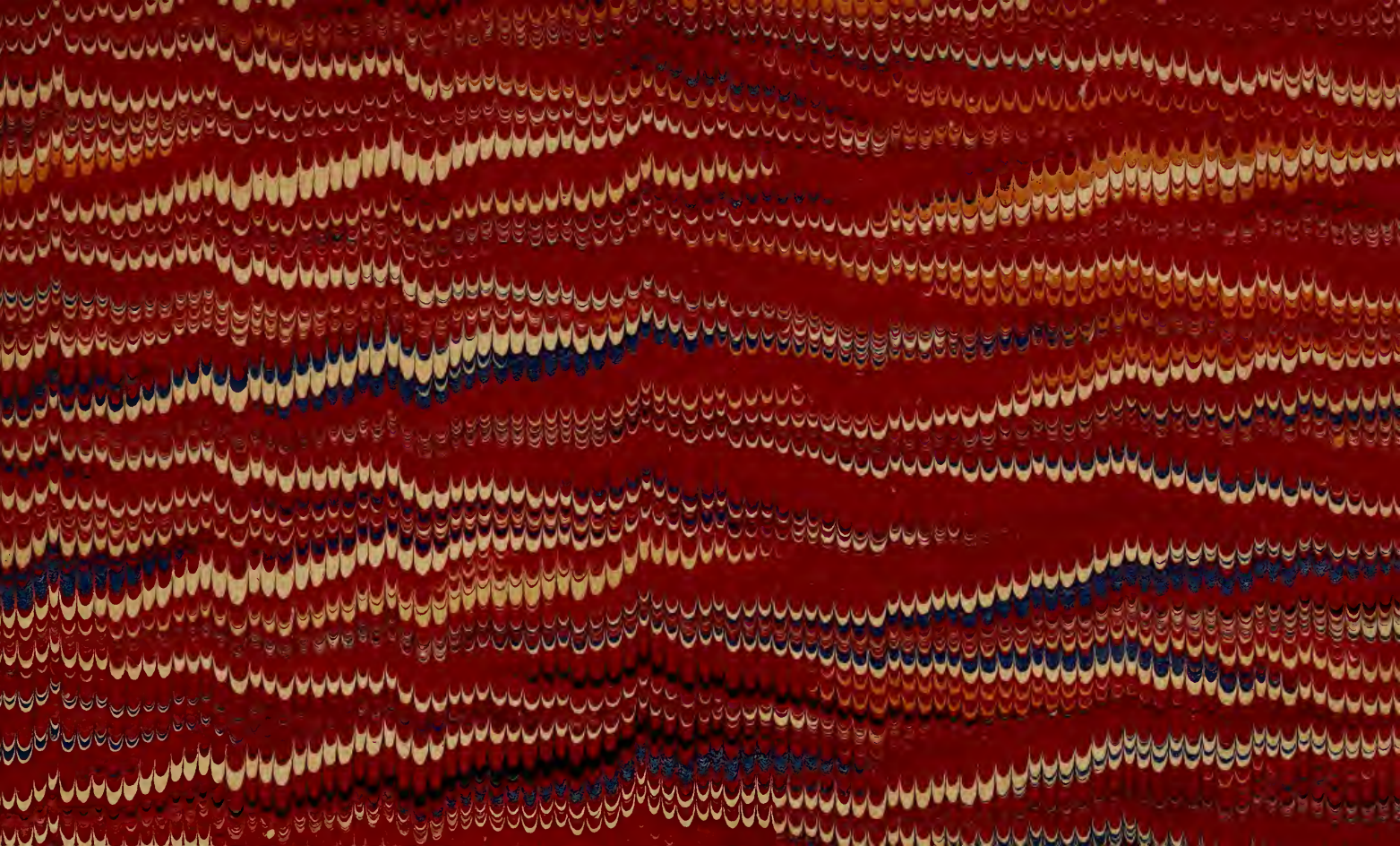
Beatrice Mary Victoria Feodore. Born April 14, 1857.

Victoria has had to this date (1875) twenty-seven grandchildren of whom twenty-four are living.

Prince Consort died Dec. 15, 1861.

THE SOVEREIGNS OF ENGLAND.

First, William the Norman,
Then William his son;
Henry, Stephen, and Henry,
Then Richard and John.
Next, Henry the third,
Edwards, one, two, and three;
And again, after Richard,
Three Henrys we see.
Two Edwards, third Richard,
If rightly I guess;
Two Henrys, sixth Edward,
Queen Mary, Queen Bess;
Then Jamie the Scotchman,
Then Charles whom they slew,
Yet received, after Cromwell,
Another Charles too.
Next Jamie the second
Ascended the throne;
Then good William and Mary
Together came on;
Then Anne, Georges four,
And fourth William all passed,
And Victoria came—
May she long be the last.



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